

The Role of Louisiana Coroners and Death Investigators in the Bureau of Family Health Mortality Surveillance Program

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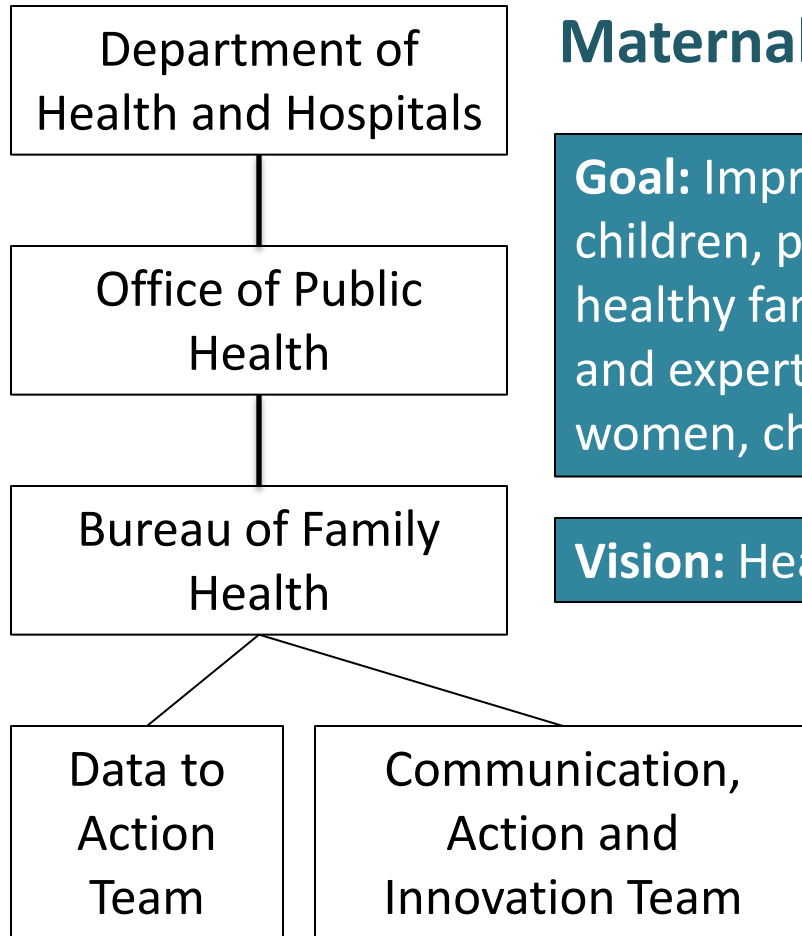


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Today's Goal

- Provide overview
- Review legislation
- Engage parish coroners and investigators
- Improve current Coroner/BFH processes
- Clarify processes, correct misconceptions and answer questions

What is the Bureau of Family Health?



Maternal and Child Health + Family Planning

Goal: Improving the health of men, women, and children, promoting positive birth outcomes and healthy families and providing partnership, leadership, and expertise to advance the health and well-being of women, children, adolescents and families.

Vision: Healthy Babies, Healthy Families, Healthy Lives

Mortality Surveillance Purpose

These sentinel surveillance systems should effectively supplement Vital Records data to provide **critical, actionable information** about factors that affect infant, child and maternal deaths.

These action-oriented processes should use robust epidemiology data and findings from a comprehensive, multidisciplinary case review to **inform policies and practices** at the state, regional, community, and health care provider levels to **improve the health and safety of families.**

Mortality Surveillance Overview

1. Deaths identified
2. Data abstracted
3. Data entered into database
4. Case Review Team develops recommendations
5. Community Action Team develops initiatives and new programs

Mortality Surveillance Programs

Fetal and Infant Mortality Review

- Includes all fetal deaths (≥ 28 weeks gestation) and infant deaths (between 24 and 36 weeks gestation) due to medical causes.

Pregnancy Associated Mortality Review

- All deaths during or within one year of pregnancy regardless of cause of death.

Child Death Review

- All unexpected infant and child deaths (0-14 years of age)
- Includes all unintentional injuries, homicide, suicide and **Sudden Unexpected Infant Deaths (SUID)**.

Sudden Unexpected Infant Death

- No immediately obvious cause of death prior to investigation
- Death occurs suddenly and unexpectedly
- Must be less than one year of age

SUID Always Includes

- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
- Unknown/Undetermined
- Accidental Suffocation or Strangulation in Bed
 - Soft bedding, pillow, waterbed, etc.
 - Overlay or rollover
 - Wedging
 - Strangulation

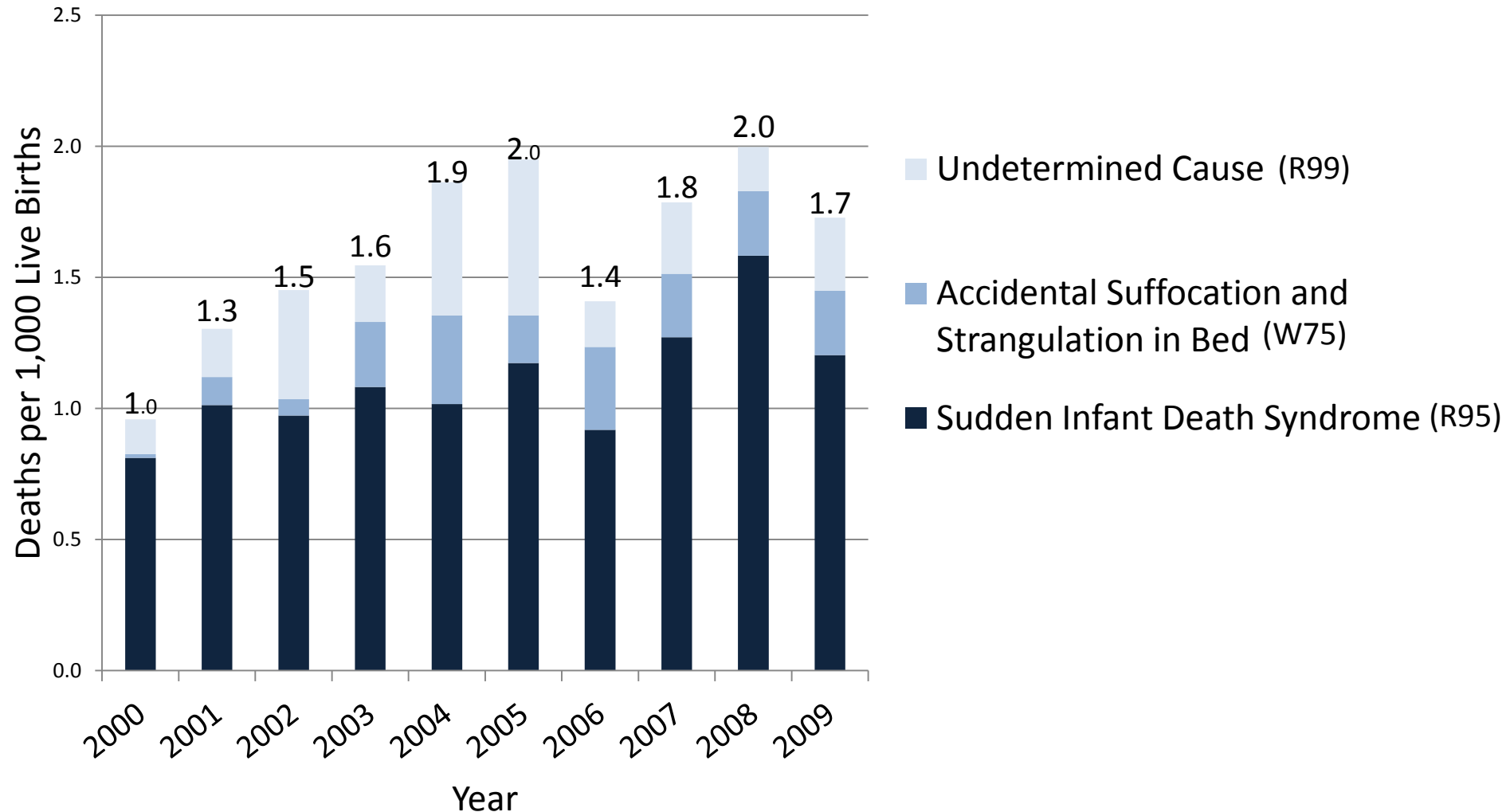
SUID Sometimes Includes

- Infections
- Inborn errors of metabolism
- Poisoning or overdose
- Cardiac channelopathies
- Head Injury
- Hypothermia

Infant Mortality in Louisiana

- Infant mortality is above the national average
 - Louisiana 8.8 per 1,000 live births
 - United States 6.4 per 1,000 live births
- SIDS rate is more than double the US
- SIDS is the leading cause of post-neonatal mortality (28 – 364 days of age)
- SUIDs accounts for...
 - 20% of all infant deaths
 - 90% of all unexpected infant deaths

SUID Rates In Louisiana, 2000-2009



CDC SUID Initiative

- Goals:
 - Standardize and improve data collected at death scene
 - Promote consistent classification and reporting of cause of death
 - Improve national reporting of SUIDs
 - Prevent SUIDs through use of improved data
- Outcomes:
 - Revised Sudden Unexplained Infant Death Investigation Reporting Form (SUIDIRF)
 - Developed a training curriculum and materials for infant deaths investigators
 - Conducted comprehensive infant death investigation trainings
 - Initiated a **state-based SUID Case Registry**

SUID Case Registry Goals

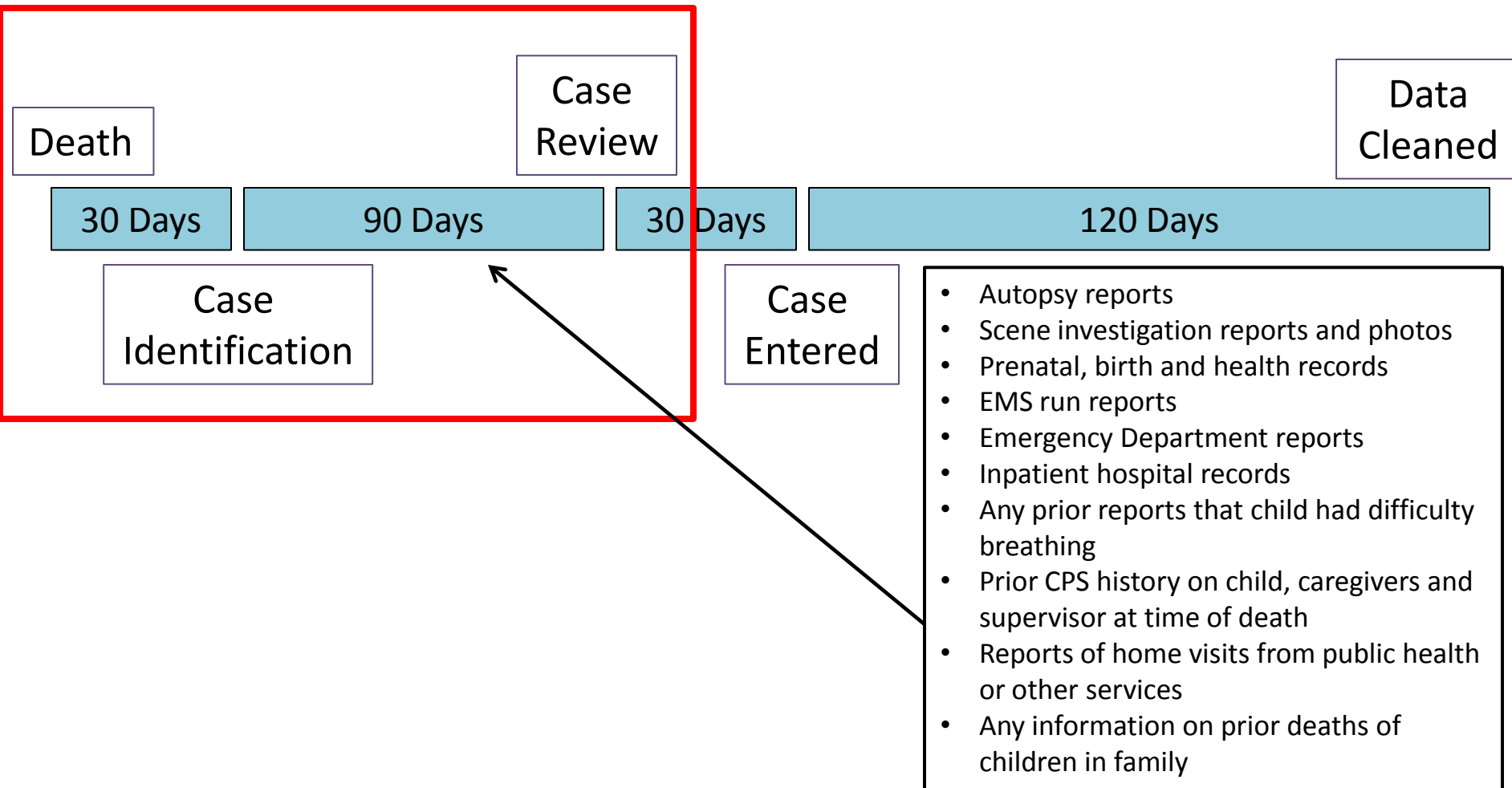
- Timely, complete and accurate population based data
 - Less than 10% missing and unknown data fields
 - Assure 100% case ascertainment
- Data-driven SUID prevention and policy and practice change



SUID Case Registry Grantee Responsibilities

- Develop an efficient and timely method for case identification
- Access at least:
 - Death certificates
 - **Coroner records**
 - Law enforcement records
- Follow CDC SUID-CR and NCCDR procedure manual
- Enter data into NCCDR Case Reporting System
- Implement a quality assurance plan
- Communicate progress to CDC

Timeline



How can you help?

- Death Identification
- SUIDIRF
- Autopsy
- Accurate Cause of Death

Death Identification

Goal: Identify 100% of SUIDs within 30 days of death

- Vital Records
- Coroners are the most direct route

Request: Notify the BFH within 5 to 7 business days of all suspected SUID cases

- Calling Alexa Erck at 504-568-3504 or 504-568-3347
 - *do not leave confidential information on voicemail*
- Faxing a notification or SUIDIRF to 504-568-3503

SUID Investigation Reporting Form

- AKA SUIDIRF
- Death Scene Investigation Reporting Tool developed as part of CDC's SUID initiative
- Includes:
 - Investigation data
 - Witness Interview
 - Infant's medical history
 - Infant's dietary history
 - Pregnancy history
 - Investigation summary
 - Scene Investigation diagrams
 - Body Investigation diagrams
 - Summary for pathologist
 - Incident scene investigation

SUIDIRF Supplemental Forms

- Includes:
 - EMS Interview
 - Hospital Interview
 - Immunization Record
 - Infant Exposure History
 - Informant Contact
 - Parental Information
 - Law Enforcement Interview
 - Scene Diagrams
 - Body Diagrams
 - Materials Collection Log
 - Nonprofessional Responder Interview
 - Primary Residence Investigation
- Not requested- for your use only

SUID Investigation Reporting Form



Goal: Abstract SUIDIRF within 90 days of death identification

Request: Send SUIDIRF to BFH within 10 of death

SUIDIRF should:

- Be completed within 24 hours of the infant death
- Be as complete as possible
- Include death scene diagram, doll reenactment and photographs

SUIDIRF

 <div style="display: inline-block; text-align: left; padding-left: 10px;"> U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Division of Reproductive Health Maternal and Infant Health Branch Atlanta, Georgia 30333 </div>  <div style="display: inline-block; text-align: right; padding-right: 10px;"> Sudden Unexplained Infant Death Investigation <h2 style="margin: 0;">SUIDI</h2> Reporting Form </div>			
INVESTIGATION DATA			
Infant's Last Name	Infant's First Name	Middle Name	Case Number
Sex: <input type="text"/> Date of Birth: <input type="text"/> Age: <input type="text"/> SS#: <input type="text"/>			
Race: <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Black/African Am. <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Pacific Isl. <input type="checkbox"/> Am. Indian/Alaskan Native <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Other			
Infant's Primary Residence:			
Address: <input type="text"/>		City: <input type="text"/>	State: <input type="text"/> Zip: <input type="text"/>
Incident Address: <input type="text"/>		City: <input type="text"/>	State: <input type="text"/> Zip: <input type="text"/>
Contact Information for Witness:			
Relationship to deceased: <input type="checkbox"/> Birth Mother <input type="checkbox"/> Birth Father <input type="checkbox"/> Grandmother <input type="checkbox"/> Grandfather <input type="checkbox"/> Adoptive or Foster Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Physician <input type="checkbox"/> Health Records <input type="checkbox"/> Other Describe: <input type="text"/>			
Last: <input type="text"/>		First: <input type="text"/>	M.: <input type="text"/> SS#: <input type="text"/>
Address: <input type="text"/>		City: <input type="text"/>	State: <input type="text"/> Zip: <input type="text"/>
Work Address: <input type="text"/>		City: <input type="text"/>	State: <input type="text"/> Zip: <input type="text"/>
Home Phone: <input type="text"/>		Work Phone: <input type="text"/>	Date of Birth: <input type="text"/>
WITNESS INTERVIEW			
1 Are you the usual caregiver? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes			
2 Tell me what happened: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>			
3 Did you notice anything unusual or different about the infant in the last 24 hrs? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes Specify: <input type="text"/>			
4 Did the infant experience any falls or injury within the last 72 hrs? <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes Specify: <input type="text"/>			
5 When was the infant LAST PLACED? Date: <input type="text"/> Military Time: <input type="text"/> : <input type="text"/> Location (room): <input type="text"/>			
6 When was the infant LAST KNOWN ALIVE(LKA)? Date: <input type="text"/> Military Time: <input type="text"/> : <input type="text"/> Location (room): <input type="text"/>			
7 When was the infant FOUND? Date: <input type="text"/> Military Time: <input type="text"/> : <input type="text"/> Location (room): <input type="text"/>			
8 Explain how you knew the infant was still alive. <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>			
9 Where was the infant - (P)laced, (L)ast known alive, (F)ound (write P, L, or F in front of appropriate response)?			
<input type="checkbox"/> Bassinet	<input type="checkbox"/> Bedside co-sleeper	<input type="checkbox"/> Car seat	<input type="checkbox"/> Chair
<input type="checkbox"/> Cradle	<input type="checkbox"/> Crib	<input type="checkbox"/> Floor	<input type="checkbox"/> In a person's arms
<input type="checkbox"/> Mattress/box spring	<input type="checkbox"/> Mattress on floor	<input type="checkbox"/> Playpen	<input type="checkbox"/> Portable crib
<input type="checkbox"/> Sofa/couch	<input type="checkbox"/> Stroller/carriage	<input type="checkbox"/> Swing	<input type="checkbox"/> Waterbed
<input type="checkbox"/> Other - describe: <input type="text"/>			

Autopsy

Goal: Abstract SUID autopsies within 90 days of death identification

Request: Send autopsy within 75 days of death

Autopsy should:

- Be completed by a Pathologist skilled in forensics
- Follow standardized autopsy procedure
- Include external, internal, microscopic, toxicology and summary reports

Legislation

Child Death Review Law R.S. 40:2019

- Mandates the review of all unexpected child deaths
- Requires the release of death investigation and autopsy reports to CDR Panels

Commission on Perinatal Care and Prevention of Infant Mortality R.S. 40:2018

- Provides FIMR and PAMR with freedom from discovery in legal proceedings
- Authorizes the review autopsies

Coroner Laws R.S. 13:5713 and R.S. 13:5714

- States that an autopsy report is public record


Public Records Law R.S. 44:19

- Stipulates that autopsy reports, the coroner's final report and death certificates are subject to public inspection

Cause of Death

Cause of Death on Death Certificate

A computer software program at the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) read the cause of death on the death certificate and translates it into an International Classification of Death (ICD 10) Code.



ICD 10 Code in Louisiana Vital Records Data

Cause of Death

Any time the documented cause of death is any combination of the following words, the computer codes the death as Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) in vital records data:

- Infant
- Unexpected
- Unexplained
- Sudden
- Death
- Syndrome

*If the cause of death is documented as Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID) it will be coded as SIDS

What should be written as the cause of death on the death certificate for a Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID) to generate accurate data?

Cause of Death

Designate *Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (ICD 10 R95)* when:

- The infant is less than one year of age
 - The death cannot be explained even after:
 - Autopsy
 - Death scene investigation
 - Review of clinical history
- *If one of the above is unavailable...

Cause of Death

Designate *Unknown or Undetermined (ICD 10 R99)* when:

- The death cannot be explained and one of the following is unavailable:
 - Autopsy
 - Death scene investigation
 - Review of clinical history

Cause of Death

Designate *Accidental Suffocation and Strangulation in Bed (ICD 10 W75)* when suffocation or strangulation:

- Occurs in any sleep environment
- Is due to anything in the sleep environment including but not limited to:
 - Bed linen, sheets or blankets
 - Overlay or roll over
 - Pillow, stuffed animals, waterbed or soft bedding

Resources

- Reimbursement
- Website
- Trainings

Reimbursement

- SUIDIRF
 - Reimbursement: \$100
 - Requirements:
 - Complete
 - Received by BFH within 10 days of death
 - Include death scene diagram, doll reenactments and photographs
- Autopsy
 - Reimbursement: \$500
 - Requirements:
 - Received by BFH within 75 days of death
 - Includes external, internal, microscopic, toxicology and summary report

Reimbursement

- W9
 - Required for first time reimbursements
- BFH Reimbursement Form
 - Submit a separate form for each autopsy and SUIDIRF
- Submission
 - Fax
 - Mail
 - Secure File Transfer
 - Please make sure that all mail is marked confidential and all faxes have a covers letter

Website

- All Forms
 - SUIDIRF
 - SUIDIRF Supplemental Forms
 - W9
 - Reimbursement Form
- Resources
 - Related Legislation
 - BFH Contact Information
 - SUID Definition
 - SUID Case Registry Link
 - News/Updates
 - SUIDIRF Trainings

<http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/page/1505>

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Louisiana Coroners Resources

The Bureau of Family Health (BFH) is committed to strengthening and developing our Mortality Surveillance Program which includes Fetal and Infant Death Review (FIMR), Child Death Review (CDR) and Pregnancy-Associated Mortality Review (PAMR). All of these processes required significant cooperation from our statewide partners including but not limited to hospitals, law enforcement, community organizations and coroners.

Our relationships with coroners vary greatly from one parish to another making it difficult to collect complete and timely data. We recognize that our message has not always been clear in the past and the confusion surrounding what we are asking has made it difficult for some coroners to comply. In an effort to create a strong working relationship with all Louisiana Coroners we would like to make things as straight forward as possible for our collaborators. Please use this page as a reference and point of clarification. This site and process are works in progress so please contact us (alexa.erck@la.gov) with any questions, comments and concerns.

Thank you in advance for your assistance and appreciate your collaboration.

[Learn more about Child Death Review at the Louisiana Coroner Forensic Collaborative March 8-9, 2013 in Lafayette.](#)
[Click here for more information and to register.](#)

Coroner FAQ

- [What is the Bureau of Family Health asking of Louisiana Coroners?](#)
- [What is Sudden Unexpected Infant Death \(SUID\) and how is it different from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome \(SIDS\)?](#)
- [How can my office be reimbursed for autopsies and death scene investigations?](#)
- [What is the Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Investigation Reporting Form \(SUIDIRF\) and how do I use it?](#)
- [Who can I call with a question on the regional and state levels?](#)

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Coroner Reimbursement

Qualifications:

The Bureau of Family Health reimburses Louisiana Coroner's Offices for qualifying Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID) death scene investigations and autopsies.

1. ALL SUID cases shall be autopsied by a Pathologist skilled in forensics following standardized autopsy procedure including external, internal, microscopic, toxicology and summary report. Approved autopsies that meet these requirements and are received by the BFH within 30 days of the death will be reimbursed \$500.
2. A death scene investigation shall be done within 24 hours of the infant death using the SUID Investigation Reporting Form (IRF) and including photographs of doll reenactments. Approved SUIDIRs that meet these requirements and are received by the BFH within 7 days of the death will be reimbursed \$100.

Documents may be submitted in any of the following ways:

- Fax: 504-568-3503
- Mail: Bureau of Family Health at 1450 Poydras Street Suite 2032, New Orleans, LA 70112
- Secure file transfer protocol site: call Alexa Erck 504-568-3504 for more information

Note:

- Each autopsy and death scene investigation report should be sent to BFH with its own completed reimbursement form.
- A W-9 form must be completed by the coroner in order for payment to be made. Please return it with your invoice, unless a W9 has been previously submitted.
- If these qualifications cannot be met please contact Alexa Erck at 504-568-3347.

Trainings

- Website
 - CDC Training Manual
 - Free On Demand Video Modules
- In Person

Questions

We Want Feedback

Alexa Erck

alexa.erck@la.gov

504-568-3347

Thank You